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NEWS

ROD R. BLAGOJEVICH - GOVERNOR

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Gov. Blagojevich announces funding to improve access to education for migrant children and students with limited English

ISBE providing nearly \$194,000 in federal funds for Regional Offices of Education to serve rural populations

SPRINGFIELD – Governor Rod R. Blagojevich announced today that nearly \$194,000 in federal grants will be awarded to 24 Regional Offices of Education (ROE). The grants will allow local ROE's to provide professional development to rural and small, local district staffs on English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction and also to help local districts identify and serve migrant children.

“As a state, we have to be sure that we’re meeting the education needs of all our students,” Gov. Blagojevich said. “Each year we see more and more bilingual students in our classrooms. We have to make sure that these kids have the tools to succeed in school and after they graduate, not just for their future, but for Illinois’ future.”

The number of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students has increased dramatically over the past decade. In 1998, less than 26,000 LEP students were served in Illinois’ bilingual education programs. That number has increased to more than 160,000 students in 2006.

A total of \$120,000 in Professional Development Grants are being awarded to Regional Offices of Education to assist them in providing small and rural districts with the knowledge and awareness of state and federal laws requiring the provision of ESL instruction. In addition, the grants will allow ROE's the ability to provide instruction on bilingual best practices to administrators, general education teachers, ESL teachers, bilingual teachers and teacher aides.

In addition to the ROE Professional Development Grants, nearly \$74,000 is being awarded through Migrant Education Outreach and School Support grants. Four ROE's are receiving the grants to assist local schools in identifying and serving migrant children. Migrant workers often travel to communities throughout Illinois for seasonal or temporary agricultural work and their children often face difficulties in school as a result of repeated moves. Under the federal Migrant Education Program, only trained migrant recruiters can document MEP eligibility. These grants are part of an ISBE initiative to expand the network of trained recruiters and ensure that all eligible migrant children are identified.

“We are committed to making sure that every child in Illinois has access to education and our LEP students are a growing segment that we have to be able to serve,” said Christopher Koch, State Superintendent of Education. “These grants allow the Regional Offices to work locally, within their communities to make sure migrant and LEP students are properly identified and are getting the resources they need to be successful.”

The money for both grant programs comes from federal No Child Left Behind funds. A list of ROE’s receiving the grants is below.

ROE Professional Development Grants for English Language Learners (All grants are \$5,000 per ROE)

Cooperative Regional Initiative for English Language Learners

- Adams/Pike ROE 1 (Administrative Agent)
- Fulton/Schuyler ROE 22
- Hancock/McDonough ROE 26
- Henderson/Mercer/Warren ROE 27
- Knox ROE 33
- Logan/Mason/Menard ROE 38
- Brown/Cass/Morgan/Scott ROE 46
- Peoria ROE 48
- Rock Island ROE 49
- Sangamon ROE 51
- Tazewell ROE 53

LaSalle/Marshall/Putnam/Woodford Cooperative

- LaSalle ROE 35
- Marshall/Putnam/Woodford ROE 43

School Works Program

- Champaign/Ford ROE 9
- Vermillion ROE 54

Individual ROE Awards for English Language Learners

- Alexander/Johnson/Massac/Pulaski/Union ROE 2
- Jo Daviess/Carroll/Stephenson ROE 8
- Clark/Coles/Cumberland/Douglas/Edgar/Moultrie/Shelby ROE 11
- Bureau/Henry/Stark ROE 28
- Calhoun/Greene/Jersey/Macoupin ROE 40
- Madison ROE 41
- Monroe/Randolph ROE 45
- Lee/Ogle ROE 47
- Whiteside ROE 55

Migrant Education Outreach and School Support

Jo Daviess/Carroll/Stephenson ROE 8	\$23,000
Bureau/Henry/Stark ROE 28	\$23,000
Madison ROE 41	\$23,000
Lee/Ogle ROE 47	\$5,000

During his administration, Gov. Blagojevich has provided \$3.8 billion in new dollars to Illinois schools boosting education funding to record levels. He has also made early childhood education a top priority for his administration, fulfilling his promise to increase investments in the Early Childhood Block Grant program by \$135 million over the past four years. His commitment to expanding early childhood education has gained national attention, including being cited by Pre-K Now as a “Pre-K budget hero” for continuing his push for pre-school expansion despite difficult budget conditions.

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